

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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INFO USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 15004

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OCON, WPRO, WHO, RP

SUBJECT: WHO WESTERN PACIFIC REGIONAL OFFICE DIRECTORSHIP
PROGRAM

1. SUMMARY. JAPANESE ARE CONCERNED OVER THE IMPLICATIONS OF THEIR VICTORY FOR THE WHO/WPRO DIRECTORSHIP. NO DONOR COUNTRY EXCEPT FRANCE VOTED FOR JAPAN. PHILIPPINES RUES ITS VOTE FOR JAPAN SINCE IT REPRESENTED A REPUDIATION OF ROMULO'S COMMITMENT TO RITHAUDEEN. SUBSEQUENT NON-PARTICIPATION BY JAPANESE DELEGATION IN MEETING IS NOT SITTING WELL WITH SOME DELEGATIONS. MALAYSIAN EMBASSY DOES NOT APPEAR EXERCISED OVER JAPANESE VICTORY AS MUCH AS IT IS OVER LACK OF JAPANESE INTEREST IN MEETING. END SUMMARY.

2. JAPANESE EMBASSY, WHICH CONDUCTED STRONG AND WELL-ORGANIZED CAMPAIGN ON BEHALF OF JAPANESE CANDIDATE FOR WPRO DIRECTORSHIP, IS CONCERNED OVER THE IMPLICATIONS OF ITS VICTORY. DR. HIROSHI NAKAJIMA, CHIEF OF THE DRUG POLICY AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION IN WHO GENEVA, WAS ELECTED OVER DR. RAJAH AHMAD NOORDIN, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF HEALTH IN THE MALAYSIAN MINISTRY OF HEALTH.

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3. ALTHOUGH THE BALLOT IS SECRET, THE VOTE INDICATED THAT ALL THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES EXCEPT FRANCE SUPPORTED NOORDIN AND THAT THE SWING VOTE WAS APPARENTLY THE PHILIPPINES. ACCORDING TO THE JAPANESE TALLY, NOORDIN RECEIVED THE VOTES OF AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, UK (HONG KONG), PRC, SRV, US, AND MALAYSIA. NAKAJIMA GOT FRANCE, SINGAPORE, PHILIPPINES,

MACAO, WESTERN SAMOA, PNG, KOREA, TONGA, AND JAPAN.

4. SINGAPORE HAD ANNOUNCED ITS SUPPORT FOR JAPAN PRIOR TO THE MEETING AND REPORTEDLY PRIOR TO NOORDIN'S CANDIDACY, AND FELT UNABLE TO BACK OUT ALTHOUGH THE MALAYSIANS WERE UNHAPPY. GOM THEN MADE A SPECIAL EFFORT TO OBTAIN THE SUPPORT OF THE PHILIPPINES TO WHICH IT APPEALED IN THE NAME OF ASEAN. (THAILAND AND INDONESIA ARE NOT MEMBERS OF THE WPRO).

5. ALTHOUGH THE GOP MFA (ASSISTANT MINISTER VERCELES) HAD AGREED TO SUPPORT JAPAN, RITHAUDEEN MADE A SPECIAL PITCH TO ROMULO DURING THE US/ASEAN MEETING IN WASHINGTON, AND ROMULO AGREED. ON HIS RETURN, HOWEVER, VERCELES ARGUED HIS CASE -- THE GOP MINISTRY OF HEALTH FAVORED NAKAJIMA WHO IS A MUCH BETTER QUALIFIED MAN THAN NOORDIN WHO WAS GOING TO RETIRE. GOP HAD ALREADY COMMITTEED ITSELF, AND BESIDES IT WOULD BE A SECRET BALLOT. ROMULO RELUCTANTLY AGREED.

6. THE MALAYSIANS ARE NOW DECIDEDLY UNHAPPY, AND THE PHILS ARE WORRIED. ROMULO INTIMATED AS MUCH TO THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR.

7. IN ANY CASE, THE APPOINTMENT STILL HAS TO BE MADE BY THE WHO EXECUTIVE BOARD NEXT JANUARY, AND THERE IS A CONFIDENTIAL

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POSSIBILITY THAT THE BOARD MAY STILL CHOOSE NOORDIN. MUCH MORE TROUBLESOME IS THAT JAPAN IS RUNNING FOR A SEAT ON THE SECURITY COUNCIL, AND THE ONLY CURRENT OPPOSITION IS BANGLADESH FROM THIS REGION. MALAYSIA HAS COMMITTED ITSELF TO BANGLADESH, WHILE THE PHILIPPINES HAS ASSURED THE JAPANESE OF ITS VOTE. PROBLEM NOW IS WHETHER THE PHILIPPINES MAY TRY TO RECTIFY ITS GYRATIONS WITH STILL ANOTHER ONE, THIS TIME TO THE DISADVANTAGE OF JAPAN ON A MUCH MORE SIGNIFICANT MATTER.

8. SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION WITH MALAYSIAN EMBOFF INDICATES THAT GOM IS NOT AS EXERCISED OVER JAPANESE VICTORY AS IT IS OVER LACK OF JAPANESE INTEREST IN THE MEETING. JAPANESE DELEGATION, EXCEPT FOR JUNIOR MEMBER, DISAPPEARED AFTER THE ELECTIONS. THIS FACT WAS ALSO NOTED AND COMMENTED UPON BY SINGAPOREAN DCM. REGARDING ITS CANDIDACY, GOM REALIZES IT HAD APPARENTLY ANNOUNCED TOO LATE, AFTER OTHER COUNTRIES (SUCH AS SINGAPORE) HAD COMMITTED THEMSELVES TO JAPAN. MURPHY

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